DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 428 055 SP 038 339

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TITLE The Education Dean's Search for Balance.
PUB DATE 1999-02-24
NOTE 38p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (Washington, DC, February 24-27, 1999).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Deans; Administrator Behavior; *Administrator Characteristics; *Administrator Role; Higher Education; Leadership Qualities; Leadership Styles; Sex Differences; Stress Variables

ABSTRACT

This study examined who deans of education were, where they worked, how they defined roles and responsibilities, what unique challenges faced female deans, how deans characterized their leadership style, what stressors impacted their ability to be effective, and how they maintained balance between scholarship and leadership and between professional and personal pressures. Data came from the Center for the Study of Academic Leadership national survey of U.S. academic deans. In 1996-97, deans from 360 institutions completed a mailed survey, the National Study of Academic Deans in Higher Education. Results indicated that deans were predominantly male, white, and over age 50. They were most likely to use the assistant dean, associate dean, or assistant to the dean positions as the positions preceding deanship. Most were from public colleges and universities. Tasks they considered most important included maintaining conducive work climates, fostering good teaching, representing the college, recruiting and selecting chairs and faculty, and maintaining effective communication across departments. Leadership styles included keeping promises, treating everyone with respect, being reliable, following through, sharing power, and taking action. Stressors mainly involved time pressures. Despite stress, most deans were satisfied with their positions. Their primary dissatisfaction was inadequate financial support. For many deans, work became their entire life, and there was tremendous pressure to find balance. The survey provided data on properties of dean trade-offs in balancing their lives. (Contains 41 references.) (SM)

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1999 AACTE Conference

ED 428 055

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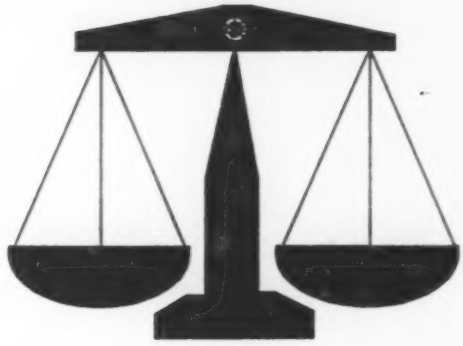

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The Education Dean's Search for Balance

What I dream of is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter. . . a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair which provides relaxation from . . . fatigue

Henri Matisse

In today's world many of us dream of balance and serenity -- if not in our professions, at least in our personal life. Academic deans are no exception.

The academic deanship is the least studied and most misunderstood position in the academy. While many education scholars have written about the organization and governance of higher education, relatively little is known about those who lead and support colleges. Aside from anecdotal speeches, unpublished research reports and magazine articles, by the 1980's the literature on the deanship consisted of only two volumes published in the mid 1960's (Dibden, 1968; Gould, 1964); a few articles on deans of colleges of education (Andersen & King, 1987; Kapel & Dejnozka, 1979), social work (Otis & Caragonne, 1979), law (Abramson & Moss, 1979), liberal arts (Scott, 1979); and Bowker's study of deans responsible for the teaching of sociology (1982). Recently a few studies have emerged investigating career paths, gender and ethnicity issues in the deanship (Moore, 1983) and a monograph on leadership journeys of education deans (Bowen, 1995).

In 1986 Dale Andersen (currently AACTE Past-President) and Joseph King conducted the only study of education deans in the past 30 years, exploring their institutional and personal profiles (Anderson & King, 1987). Not only has a decade passed since this study but the role, responsibilities, tenure, satisfaction and commitment to the deanship have drastically

changed. Historically, deans of education appear to have undergone a transformation from chief academic officer to chief executive officer with more emphasis placed on extramural funding, personnel decision making, and alumni relations. The vision of the dean as a quiet, scholarly leader has been overtaken by this executive image of the dean as politically astute and economically savvy. Some currently view the role of the dean as a *dove* of peace intervening among warring factions that cause destructive turbulence in the college, a *dragon* driving away internal or external forces that threaten the college, and a *diplomat* guiding, inspiring and encouraging people who live and work in the college (Tucker & Bryan, 1988). No matter what the view, today's dean is increasingly under attack and out of balance, as evidenced by a recent article in *Fortune* magazine.

> Something bad is happening to (business deans). Their terms in office seem to get shorter. No more serene-looking Franklin Delano Deans reigning for decades, but plenty of troubled faces whizzing by, brass nameplates revealing that one lasted three years, another four. (O'Reilly, 1994, p. 64)

What is going on? O'Reilly concludes that today's colleges are almost impossible to manage well and academics who are trying to run or repair them are getting "burned out and eased out with astonishing speed." Edward Lawler, an organizational effectiveness scholar, concludes: "Most deans now seem to fail. It is a terribly difficult balancing act."

Our Investigation of Academic Deans

A decade later, our investigation updates the Andersen-King profile of education deans using data from a national survey. Our study of education deans in the United States also seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the education deans and where do they work?
2. How do they define their roles and responsibilities?
3. What unique challenges and roles do female deans experience?
4. How do deans characterize their leadership style?
5. What stresses impact deans' ability to be effective academic leaders?
6. Finally, how do deans maintain balance between scholarship and leadership, and between professional and personal pressures?

The Study of the Deanship

This paper is based on survey data from the Center for the Study of Academic Leadership national study of academic deans in the United States.[1] The national study was conducted between October 1996 and January 1997. Academic deans were mailed the *National Study of Academic Deans in Higher Education* (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton & Hermanson, 1996). The sample of deans was selected from one of the following three groupings of Carnegie classifications -- Research I & II and Doctoral I & II; Masters I & II; or Baccalaureate I & II. From this initial group of colleges and universities, 60 public and 60 private institutions were randomly selected from each Carnegie category resulting in a sample of 360 institutions. At each of the sample institutions the deans of the colleges of education -- and for comparative purposes, deans of business, liberal arts, and allied health professions -- were asked to complete the survey. The overall sample size consisted of 1,370 deans, with a response rate of 60%. Education deans represented 29% of the return response (n= 221).

The major aspects of the Dillman (1978) Total Design Method were used in the design and distribution of the survey. Research instruments used

[1]The Center for the Study of Academic Leadership is a University Council for Educational Administration Center co-directed at Iowa State University and Washington State University.

in the survey include the Dean's Stress Inventory (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton & Hermanson, 1996), Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Questionnaire (Rizzo et al., 1970), Dean's Task Inventory (Gmelch et al., 1996), Satisfaction with Dean's Role (Gmelch et al., 1996), Dean's Leadership Inventory (Rosenbach & Sashkin, 1995) and demographic and contextual variables.[2]

Who Are the Education Deans?

In 1986 when Andersen and King studied deans of education, the majority were 50 years or older, white, and male. Only 12% of this sample reported minority status and all those who did were African American. Thirty-three percent were housed in doctoral granting institutions, 38% headed colleges in comprehensive universities, and 27% were located at baccalaureate universities. Sixty-four percent of these deans worked at public institutions. More than one-half the deans had risen from faculty ranks, had little formal preparation as administrators, and had been inside hires. Most had been in their positions about five years and planned to remain in the position for another 10 years. If their tenure as dean were terminated prematurely, these deans were not all sure they would return to the classroom.

The current study of education deans found that little has changed. Of this sample, 35% were women and 15% were minority (a slight increase over the 1987 study's findings). In addition, minority deans were more diverse with representation in each of the primary ethnic/racial groups (African

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[2]This report on education deans uses descriptive statistics with some comparisons between education deans and the other deans in the study. Other manuscripts are being published investigating the relationship among variables such as stress (Gmelch, Wolverton & Wolverton, 1999), role conflict and ambiguity, job satisfaction and gender (Wolverton, Wolverton & Gmelch, 1998; 1999), and Australian deans (Sarros, Gmelch & Tanewski, 1998).

American, Asian American, Hispanic, and American Indian).[3] African Americans still made up the largest proportion of this group -- one half. Most (82%) were married (a finding that Andersen and King did not report but we suspect was similar) and on average 54 years old. Few had children living at home.[4]

Career Path. The conventional pathway to becoming a dean is "professional ascension" or rising through the ranks (Morris, 1981).[5] In education deanships compared to others, for example, deans were most likely to use the assistant, associate, or assistant to the dean positions as the only positions preceding a deanship. When we asked about administrative experience prior to their current deanship, 30% had been deans before, less than 40% had been associate deans, more than 60% had been department chairs, and 18% had administrative experience outside the academy. While it is not evident whether deans matriculate thorough certain administrative ranks before reaching the deanship, clearly the position of department chair seems to be the common step to the deanship.

When asked what their next move would be, their most frequent response was either to move up to a higher position in academic leadership (22%) or return to faculty ranks (27%) (see Table 1A). Another set of deans

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[3] AACTE indicated that as of March, 1998, approximately 200 of the 595 deans of education were women (33%) and 13% were minority (Imig, 1998).

[4] According to earlier studies, having fewer children at home should bea significant stress reliever. In this study, deans who did have children at home, experienced increased stress and imbalance between their personal and professional lives.

[5] Moore and her colleagues (1983) found that the large majority of deans have been faculty, a position that has constituted the principal entry portal to the dean's career trajectory. A strictly hierarchical linear model for the deanship is not clear, however. Therefore, once employed by the academy, no particular leadership or administrative experience seemed to lead to the deanship. As a matter of fact, "more deans conform to variations from the 'norms' than to the 'norms' themselves" (Moore, et al., 1983, p. 514).

expressed no interest in moving (17%) while an equal number thought their next move would be retirement (17%). Only a few had a desire to move to another dean position at a similar institution (7%) or a more prestigious institution (8%). A few saw themselves changing to a non-academic leadership position (2%). Again the profile of deans seems to have changed little. Few plan to return to teaching positions.

College Characteristics. With regard to institutional profile, 63% were from public colleges and universities and 37% private. Thirty-six percent of the deans served in research universities, 47% in comprehensive and 17% in bachelor-granting institutions. Most were located in urban areas (40%) with smaller proportions in suburban (27%) and rural (33%).

On the average, deans worked with one associate dean, a couple of directors/coordinators, four clerical staff, and five department chairs; employed 62 faculty; and enrolled 634 graduate students and 1162 undergraduates. Overall, deans from other colleges had more personnel (eight department chairs and 95 faculty), more undergraduates (2355), but fewer graduate students (297).

With regard to college climate, education deans rated their colleges as good to excellent in personal relations among faculty, staff and students; and quality of faculty; but average in the academic ability of students. They also rated their universities good to excellent in relationships with senior administrators and as a place to work. On the other hand, education deans felt their institutions were less than average in private funding and financial commitment to the university by the state. Salaries, racial climate, gender equity, and intellectual climate were reported as average.

Leadership Evolution. Where does the evolution of leadership begin? In the home? At high school and college? Almost 70% of the deans

attributed their parents (guardians) with stressing high standards of excellence during their formative years. Women and minorities were significantly more likely to classify their parents in this manner than were white males.

We also asked education deans to reflect on the degree to which they assumed leadership roles in high school and college (see Table 1B). Over half of the education deans took leadership roles in service organizations (55%), club activities (53%) and student government (52%). About a quarter of the deans also took leadership roles in athletics (28%), fraternities and sororities (23%), and literary/student newspapers (29%). Male deans were more active in athletics than women; this may have been because opportunities for women to participate in athletics were not as readily available as they are today. Women, however, tended to be more active in newspapers, service organizations, and clubs -- leadership venues more equitably open to them. Minority deans assumed significantly more leadership roles than their white counterparts.

The premise behind this question in our survey was that practice in young adult years prepares future leaders for the roles they may play in the academy later. Student government prepares politicians; literary organizations fine tunes communication skill; clubs and fraternities and sororities offer arenas in interpersonal skills; athletics builds team work; and service organizations create a sense of social responsibility and servant leadership. While no activity proved common to the majority of deans surveyed, they did appear to have engaged in leadership roles earlier in their career. In fact, education deans were significantly more likely than other academic deans to have participated in high school or college athletics, student government, and service organizations.

Why Do Academics Seek the Dean Position and Why Are They Chosen?

A more intriguing question for this study was what motivated people to become deans in the first place. Almost all of the education deans indicated they had a desire to contribute to and improve the college (96%) and sought the deanship for personal growth (93%). Four of five deans took the position to influence the development of faculty (79%) and half wanted to advance their administrative career (55%). In contrast to these intrinsic and altruistic reasons for becoming deans, fewer sought the position for financial gain (26%) or the power and authority of the position (15%).

Why do deans believe they were chosen? Did they feel they were selected because they were suited to: deal with growth, facilitate change, deal with crisis, or sustain college programs? The highest portion believed it was because they were best suited to facilitate change (42%), followed by sustaining college's programs (24%), or dealing with growth (15%) or crisis (11%). In addition, they also believed they were selected due to their (1) reputation, (2) administrative experience, (3) scholarship, (4) political acuity, and (5) fund-raising ability (in rank order). Very few felt that gender or ethnicity played a major role in their selection.

The Duties of the Dean

There is no doubt that today's deans keep busy. Endless meetings, stacks of paperwork, constant interruptions, and fragmented encounters on a multitude of topics set a frantic daily pace. But to what end? Virtually every leadership book written lists and exults the tasks, duties and responsibilities. A list specific to deans was developed as the 32 item Dean Task Inventory. The genesis of these duties can be traced back to work on academic leaders by Smart and Elton (1976), Moses and Row (1990) and Gmelch and Miskin (1995). But how critical are the tasks that deans need to accomplish? Education

deans were asked to rate the importance they placed on each of 23 tasks. The top ten tasks rated as important by 80 percent or more of the deans are listed in Table 2. The dean's role as symbolic and cultural leader appears paramount when we see the importance they place on maintaining a conducive work climate (96%), representing the college to the central administration (95%), developing and initiating long-range college goals (85%) and communicating the mission to employees and constituents (87%). Another role the dean plays is the development of chairs and faculty: recruiting and selecting (95%), encouraging their professional development (88%), and evaluating their performance (87%). Nine out of ten deans also report that it is important to foster good teaching (95%) and engage in financial planning, budget preparation and decision making (90%).

But deans cannot do everything -- they only have 24 hours in a day. Are all deans duties deemed equally critical or highly important? Table 3 identifies tasks that sixty percent or fewer of the deans believe are less important. In contrast to the leadership functions identified in Table 2, less than half of the deans believe managing non-academic staff (35%) and assuring the maintenance of college records (46%) are of high importance to their job. In addition to general management duties, six of ten deans also view certain coordinating tasks as less important: assigning duties to chairs and directors (57%), informing college employees of university concerns (59%), and coordinating college activities with constituents (62%). If time is the problem, then it is important to notice that four of the remaining eight tasks deemed as moderately important deal with maintaining their own scholarship: modeling scholarship by publishing and making presentations (54.7%); maintaining one's own scholarship program (54.8%); obtaining external grants and contracts (57.8%); and remaining current on one's own

discipline (59.8%). Surprisingly two other items dealing with fostering alumni relations (58.9%) and coordinating college activities with constituents (61.7%) are also in the lower third of tasks deans in this study consider important.

Overall; how do deans deal with their time pressures? Results from this study indicate that they tend to place more importance on their leadership and personnel development roles than their own scholarship and the management and coordinating tasks of the college.

Deans' Leadership Styles

How do deans characterize their leadership style? Deans responded to statements from the Rosenbach and Sashkin Leadership Inventory (1995) indicating to what extent certain statements characterized their leadership behavior. Ratings ranged from 1 (little to no) to 5 (very great). While all deans consistently rated 10 of these statements as more characteristic than the rest, significant differences in level of response appeared between education deans and deans from the other disciplines. In rank order, the ten statements that most characterized the leadership behaviors of education deans were: keep promises, treat others with respect regardless of position, can be relied on, follow through on commitments, share power and influence with others, oriented toward action rather than status quo, involve others in new ideas and projects, act on the principle that one person can make a difference, respect people's differences, and encourage others to share their ideas for the future. As Table 4 indicates, in each instance (with the exception of the statements on commitments, sharing power and influence, and one person making a difference) education deans perceived themselves significantly more characteristic of these traits than did deans of business, liberal arts and health professions.

The Stresses and Satisfactions of the Deanship

Given the demands of performing the actual tasks of the deanship, what are the sources of stress? Deans were asked to indicate the degree to which each of 43 situations caused them stress. Table 5 identifies the top ten stress traps experienced by deans. Seven of the top ten related to time pressures: excessively high self expectations, insufficient time for academic duties, too many meetings, too heavy a workload, balancing personal and professional demands, deadlines for paperwork and reports, and activities outside regular working hours. Clearly deans feel trapped by time. In addition, they experience pressure from both fiscal and personnel practices (trying to obtain financial support for programs, making decisions affecting the lives of others, and handling concerns and conflicts with faculty).

Given the stress and pressures of the deanship, are deans dissatisfied with their positions? Interestingly, more deans are satisfied than not. As Table 6 displays, deans are more satisfied than dissatisfied with the clarity of their role, control over their work environment and their compensation. However, less than half of the deans are satisfied with the pace and workload of their jobs. Overall, eight of ten deans (78%) expressed satisfaction with their deanship, with only 2% of the deans expressing dissatisfaction.

Even so, what indications do we have of deans' dissatisfaction with their positions? The primary dissatisfactions reported by the deans in 1970 were inadequate financial support from the university and inadequate alumni financial support. In 1979 a study of social work deans by Otis and Caragonne also found that fund raising and budget development activities were the most likely to be mentioned as sources of pressure by deans. In our study two decades later only 16% of the education deans believed the state had

a strong financial commitment to the university, and only 20% believed they had a strong private funding base.

Deans' Balancing Acts

For many deans, work becomes their entire life. One of the prices deans pay when they enter the deanship is an incredible time commitment and the pressure to find balance in their lives. The role of the dean brings with it an identity and self-concept that often dictates who deans socialize with, where they live, how long they retain their position, and what lifestyle they lead. Obviously being a dean plays an important part of their lives and provides them with pleasures as well as pressures.

Pressures over the past two decades have begun to transform the once unquestioning academic administrator into an individual struggling to find balance between total academic immersion and the balance of a fulfilled private life. Psychologists suggest that one cannot be unhealthy or ineffective in private life and still be an effective professional. As Robert Louis Stevenson once remarked, "Perpetual devotion to what a (person) calls his (her) business is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things."

The deans' ability to develop a balanced life-style depends on how well they can make trade-offs between leadership and personal interests. Do they believe their private life is in balance with their professional? Evidently only 29% of the deans could testify that the lack of balance did not cause them moderate to severe stress. What price do deans pay for their venture into college leadership? Where will it lead? What are the benefits? What are the costs? What changes have occurred in their personal lives and are they satisfied with these changes? Can deans find balance in the deanship? Is their life after a deanship?

Trade-offs: The Dean's Balancing Act

What does this research lead us to believe about education deans' ability to balance their life effectively with trade-offs? What price do they pay for their venture into the deanship? The price depends on their ability to manage trade-offs between professional and personal pressures of the deanship. A trade-off is defined as an exchange of one interest in return for another; especially, a giving up of something desirable (Greiff & Munter, 1980). What does our data tell us about the deans' ability to manage their trade-offs effectively?

Properties of Dean Trade-offs

1. *Trade-offs from both professorial and private interests vie for the same resource--time.* Time pressures dominate the deanship -- meetings, heavy workload, deadlines, after work activities, excessive demands, and insufficient academic time head the list of top stresses (Table 5). While many complain that faculty are incessantly seeking financial resources, the real limited resource for deans appears to be time. This problem exist because time as a resource is in limited supply:

- Time is inelastic;
- Time is irreplaceable;
- Everything requires time;
- Every dean has the same amount of time;
- Everyone wants part of the dean's time; and
- Most deans are ill-equipped to manage time effectively.

According to Peter Drucker, the first step in time management is to take two or three days and conduct a time audit in 15 minute intervals to see how time is currently spent. Once they know where their time goes, they can begin to strategize on techniques to better use it.

2. *Trade-offs act much like a ledger, you cannot debit one side without crediting the other.* The relationship between professorial and personal time resembles a "zero-sum" game -- all deans have 24 hours in a day. Forty-four percent of the education deans experience excessive stress from trying to balance their personal and professional lives. If they take an extra hour for racquetball over lunch, they feel compelled to put in extra time in the office or at home.

3. *Too many trade-offs in one direction creates excessive time pressures and lead to stress.* What percent of the stress in a dean's life results from the deanship? This question was asked of 1,400 deans in four disciplines across America. The result -- 60% of the stress in their lives came from their jobs. When asked about the nature of their stress, deans identified the stress traps in Table 5. Note that "imposing excessively high self-expectations" ranks as the most significant time trap. This item proved to be the most predictive indicator of excessive stress for deans. Setting realistic expectations is key to a balanced deanship with less stress.

4. *Trade-offs often change with roles professors assume in the academy.* Most deans perceive themselves to be both faculty and administrator (62%), however, a sizable portion (33%) view themselves solely as administrators and only 6% perceive themselves as primarily faculty (Figure 1). This is in sharp contrast to recent studies of department chairs who primarily see themselves as faculty (44%) or both faculty and administrator (52%) (Figure 2). Only 4% of the chairs perceived themselves as primarily administrators (Gmelch & Burns, 1994). Therefore, as deans move from department to college administration they drastically shift their self-identity to being primarily an administrator (4% to 44%). It appears that the more forcefully deans row toward the shores of administration, the more

distant they become to their initial identity as a faculty member. Chairs, on the other hand, tend to retain their identity. In fact, most chairs return to faculty status (65%) after serving as department chair (Carroll, 1990). In this study only 17% of the deans plan to return to faculty status. This role identity change underscores the trade-offs academics make when entering the deanship.

5. *Women deans seem to have different trade-offs than men deans.* Relatively little is know about individuals who serve as academic deans, in general; even less is know about female deans. For the most part, what they do, how they do it, and how their perception of both compare with those of their male counterparts has remained a mystery. However, a growing body of literature does suggest that female leaders do differ from male administrators not only in their underlying philosophy but in their approach as well. For instance, women view power as a means to promote change; men view it as a way of exerting influence over people (Kelly, 1991; Chliwniak, 1997). In addition, women in higher education administration tend to be more interested in facilitating, in building relations, and in contributing to the institution and society (Schaef, 1985). In general men seem more concerned with rules, procedural fairness, and justice and, as a result, they stress separation, detachment, and individualism. Women, in contrast, stress relationships, connectedness, process, group membership and harmony (Gilligan, 1982; Kuk, 1990; Chliwniak, 1997).

Women comprised 41% of the sample in the *National Survey of Academic Deans.* Compared to their male counterparts, they are more apt to be single, have mentors, use networking to vent and to explore new ideas, and be located in urban areas. They are less likely to be interested in moving to another position at another university. While male and female deans

define some of their tasks similarly, female deans rate those tasks significantly more important than do male deans. For instance, they are more concerned than male deans about representing their colleges to the university, maintaining a conducive work climate, engaging financial and long range planning, maintaining effective communication, fostering diversity, and soliciting ideas from others. In addition female deans' leadership style may be characterized as being more cooperative and collaborative. They also experience more stress than their male colleagues. These differences and others are illuminated and explored in other publications (Wolverton, Wolverton & Gmelch, 1998).

6. *Deans need to learn how to focus on their HIPOS and relegate their LOPOS.* The key to effective leadership is to focus work time and effort on "high pay-offs" (HIPOS). High pay-off tasks are not represented in the daily "to do" lists. Typically they are the urgent, but not necessarily the most important tasks. HIPOS represent the critical three or four "make or break" functions of a deanship such as maintaining a conducive college environment, fostering good teaching, selecting quality chairs and faculty, and representing the college to the administration (Table 2). Once faculty become deans they place less importance on advancing their own scholarship (Table 3). Tasks that were once HIPOS to secure tenure and promotion through faculty ranks tend to become low pay-off (LOPO) tasks in a dean's efforts to advance the college.

7. *Deans find they have to trade-off their scholarship for duties in leadership.* Although scholarship was characterized as a LOPO for deans, AACTE's Chief Executive Officer, David Imig (1997), reported in a recent issue of *AACTE Briefs,* that many education deans are able to maintain scholarship (publish books) while serving as deans. The results of our study indicate that

not only do 60% of the education deans rate their scholarly activity as the same or lower than prior to becoming dean, but they rate their scholarly productivity significantly higher than other deans studied and were more satisfied with their level of scholarship.

8. *Routine trade-off decisions favor the urgent over the important. -- unless goals are established.* Daily pressures typically result in a tyranny of the urgent. Some dean tasks such as managing non-academic staff and maintaining records do not represent HIPOS of their positions, but often receive immediate attention due to a sense of urgency created by the work environment. For example, a call from a department for routine data needed for a two o'clock faculty meeting may take priority -- but at the expense of a less urgent but possibly more important personnel matter (See Figure 3; Gmelch, 1996). The onslaught of voice mail and electronic mail has created a sense of urgency for routine communication. Without goals or objectives guiding the dean's day, the inertia of activities dominating one side of the scale can engulf the dean's energy and time. Personal and academic goals need to be planned for the year to guide important daily activities.

The Future of the Education Dean

The Life-Span of a Dean. Given the trade-offs, stresses and levels of satisfaction with the deanship, have academics become less interested in academic leadership? Are deans, in fact, serving shorter terms? In 1979 Abramson and Moss found that 63% of the nation's law school deans served five years or less, with an average tenure of three and one half years; a sharp decline from an average tenure of six years in 1970. A dozen years later Bowker found that deans served an average of just under six years (1982), and just a decade ago Anderson and King reported that exactly half of the education deans had been in office for five or less with almost 20% in their

initial year as deans (1987). Our study of Australian deans also concluded that 20% were serving their first year as dean and 75% of the deans had served five years or less (Sarros, Gmelch, & Tanewski, 1998). In the United States we found the average length of service as dean was 6.6 years and 16% of deans were in their first year of service (Gmelch & Wolverton, 1997).

Given the diverse methodologies and multiple disciplines used by these studies, the evidence is not conclusive whether deans are serving fewer years or not. However, all indications are that about one-in-five deans leave their position each year and they are serving just slightly longer than a typical five year term. *Fortune* magazine's assertion of the revolving deanship may not be too far from the truth. Nevertheless, the conclusion that there is no such thing as a "standardized dean" probably still holds true today.

The Case and Cure for Vertigo. Is the education dean suffering from constant vertigo -- imbalance between personal and professional life; between leadership responsibilities and academic goals? Managing time effectively (not only efficiently) provides one of the keys to a successful deanship and a balanced life. No one is free from the stress trap of time: No one has enough time, yet everyone has all there is.

While lack of time creates the downside of the deanship, 95% of the education deans believe they are doing a good job and 87% view themselves as effective leaders. If perception is reality, education colleges are in good hands. In addition, eight of ten deans report working in a good university and in a college with quality faculty. While the deanship may be an imperiled role in the academy, education deans report themselves to be satisfied and surviving their challenges.

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Table 1A

The Dean's Next Move

Rank		Percentage
1.	Return to faculty	27%
2.	Higher leadership position	22%
3.	Not interested in moving	17%
3.	Retirement	17%
5.	Another deanship (at more prestigious institution)	8%
6.	Another deanship (at similar institution)	7%
7.	Non-academic position	2%

Table 1B

Dean Leadership Roles in High School or College

	Activity	Percent Participated
1.*	Service Organizations	54.7%
2.*	Club Activities	53.1%
3.*	Student Government	51.6%
4.	Literary/News	28.5%
5.	Athletics	26.8%
6.	Fraternities & Sororities	22.7%

*Denotes significantly greater participation than other deans

Table 2

Most Important Tasks for Education Deans

Rank	Task	Percent Rating Tasks as Important
1	Maintain conducive work climate	96.4%
2	Foster good teaching	95.4%
3	Represent college to administration	95.0%
4	Recruit & select chairs & faculty	94.1%
5	Maintain effective communication across departments	91.2%
6	Financial planning & budget preparation	89.5%
7	Encourage professional development of chairs, faculty & staff	88.1%
8	Evaluate chair & faculty performance	87.2%
9	Communicate mission to employees & constituents	86.8%
10	Develop long range college goals	84.6%

Table 3

Least Important Tasks for Education Deans

Rank	Task	Percent Rating Tasks as Important[1]
1	Manage non-academic staff	34.6%
2	Assure maintenance of college records	46.3%
3	Model scholarship by publishing and presentation	54.7%
4	Maintain own scholarship program	54.8%
5	Assign duties to chairs & directors	57.1%
6	Inform college employees of university concerns	57.8%
6	Obtain external funds	57.8%
8	Foster alumni relations	58.9%
9	Remain current in own discipline	59.8%
10	Coordinate college activities with constituents	61.7%

Table 4

How Nine out of Ten Deans Characterize Their Leadership Style

	Characteristic Statement	Percent[1]
1.*	Keep promises	99.5%
2.*	Treat others with respect regardless of position	99.1%
3.*	Can be relied on	97.7%
4.	Follow through on commitments	96.7%
5.	Share power and influence with others	95.0%
6.*	Oriented toward action rather than status quo	94.5%
6.*	Involve others in new ideas and projects	94.5%
8.	Act on the principle that one person can make a difference	94.3%
9.*	Respect people's differences	93.9%
10.*	Encourage others to share their ideas for the future	93.0%

*Perceived significantly greater tendency to exhibit this leadership characteristic than other deans.

[1]Percent of education deans that characterized their leadership style as Great (4) or Very Great (5) on a one-to-five point scale.

Table 5

Top Education Dean Stressors

Rank	Stressor	Mean Score[1]
1.	Excessively high self expectations	3.55
2.	Insufficient academic time	3.50
3.	Too many meetings	3.44
4.	Too heavy workload	3.29
5.	Professional & personal balance	3.24
6.	Financial program support	3.21
7.	Making decisions affecting others	3.14
8.	Report and paperwork deadlines	3.09
9.	Conflict with faculty	3.06
10.	Activities outside regular hours	2.99

[1]Based on a level of stress from 1 (slight) to 5 (high).

Table 6

Education Deans Level of Satisfaction

	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied
a. Clarity of role	75%	18%	8%
b. Pace	47%	27%	26%
c. Workload	35%	27%	38%
d. Work environment	55%	25%	20%
e. Compensation	56%	26%	19%
f. Overall Satisfaction	78%	20%	2%

Figure 1

Who Are You? (Academic Deans)

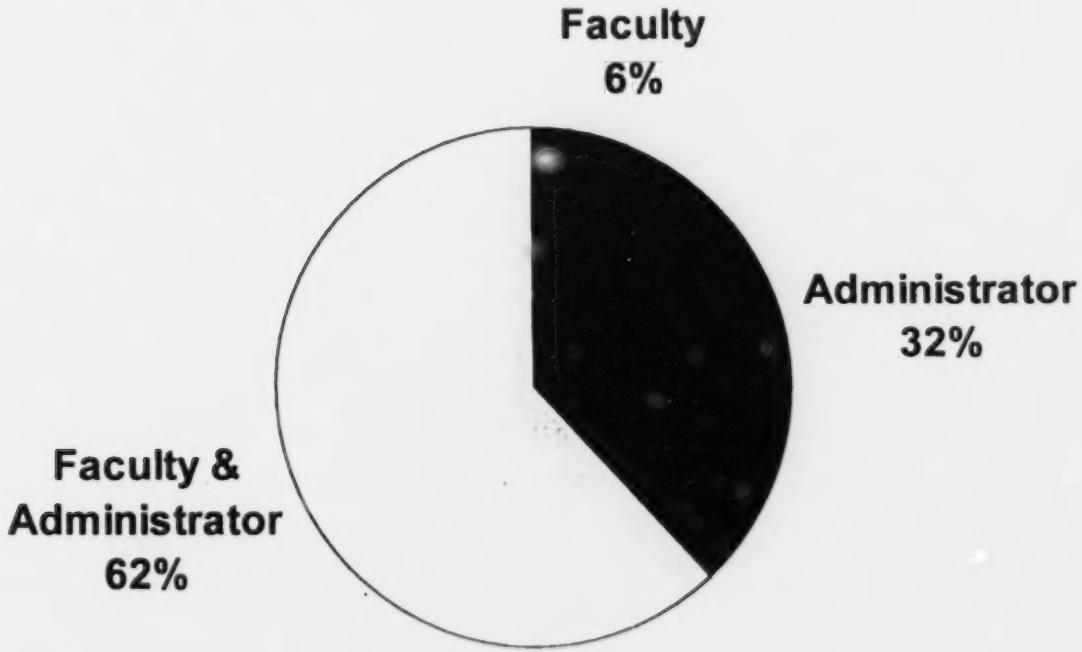

Figure 2

Who Are You? (Department Chairs)

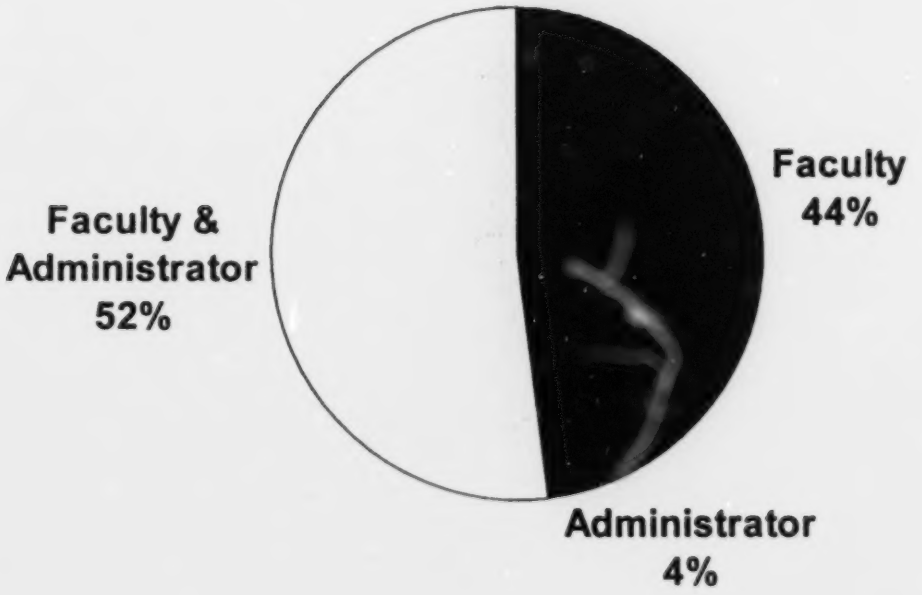

Figure 3

Dean Time Management Matrix

	Important	Not Important
Not Urgent	1 Planned HIPOS	4 Time Wasters
Urgent	2 Hot Spots	3 The Illusion

Source: Gmelch, WH (1996). It's About Time. Academe. September-October, pp. 22-26.